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Networking as a Predictor of Work–Nonwork Enrichment: Mechanisms on the Within- and Between-Person Level

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Abstract

A positive work–nonwork interface is an important aspect of successful career development because it is associated with satisfaction, positive health, and positive work outcomes. However, the role of proactive behaviors at work for work–nonwork enrichment mechanisms has thus far not received much attention. Based on the conservation of resource theory (Hobfoll, 1989) and work–family enrichment theory (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), we investigated the instrumental (i.e., coworker support) and affective (i.e., positive affect at work) enrichment mechanisms facilitated by networking. We conducted a diary study for within-person effects and a longitudinal panel study for between-person effects. Results supported the notion that networking is positively related to coworker support and positive affect at work on both the within- and between-person level. Furthermore, the mediating effect of coworker support for the relation between networking and work–nonwork enrichment on the within-person level was supported. On the between-person level, the mediating effect through positive affect at work was supported. Implications for research and practice concerning the resources gained by networking and the different work–nonwork enrichment mechanisms on the within- and between-person levels are discussed.

Keywords: Work–nonwork enrichment, affective enrichment, instrumental enrichment, internal networking

Highlights

- Examined enrichment mechanisms of networking on within and between person levels
- Networking was associated with coworker support and positive affect on both levels
- Instrumental enrichment occurred via coworker support on the within-person level
- Affective enrichment occurred via positive affect on the between-person level

A key contributing factor of a successful and happy life is a positive work–nonwork interface (e.g., Vanderpool & Way, 2013). A positive work–nonwork interface is associated with, for example, higher job and life satisfaction (McNall, Nicklin, & Masuda, 2010), and better mental health (Haar, Russo, Suñe, & Ollier-Malaterre, 2014). Resources play an important role in how work can lead to positive outcomes in the nonwork domain. In the work–family enrichment model, Greenhaus and Powell (2006) proposed instrumental and affective nonwork enrichment mechanisms. Instrumental enrichment refers to the spillover of various resources (e.g., social support, skills, material resources, flexibility, etc.) from work to nonwork. The affective enrichment mechanism consists of the spillover of positive affect, including emotions and moods, to nonwork.

To gain resources which can trigger positive nonwork enrichment mechanisms, proactive behaviors at work might play an important role (Crant, 2000; Hobfoll, 1989). Proactive behaviors are an important aspect of today's work life (Crant, 2000), with potentially important effects on the nonwork domain. A focus on how individuals can actively build resources through proactive behaviors at work, and thereby facilitate the work–nonwork interface, thus emphasizes the active role of individuals to achieve a successful work–nonwork interface (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000).

Prevoius research supported the notion that proactive behaviors at work can enhance resources at work. For example, Tims, Bakker, and Derks (2013) showed that structural and social job resources increased as a result of proactive behaviors at work. Further, Ng and Feldman (2012) found a positive relation between voice behavior (i.e., a form of proactive behavior at work) and job performance in their meta-analysis. They argued in line with conservation of resources theory (COR; Hobfoll, 1989) that employees acquire new resources through voice behavior, and therefore perform better. Also, the mechanisms of instrumental and affective nonwork enrichment were supported in previous research. For example, Siu et al. (2015) found an instrumental work–nonwork enrichment mechanism through supervisor

support and an affective enrichment mechanism through job satisfaction on work–family enrichment. Additionally, previous research provided evidence for the relation between proactive behaviors and the positive spillover of resources to the nonwork domain on the within- (Rodríguez-Muñoz, Sanz-Vergel, Demerouti, & Bakker, 2014) and between-person level (Konradt & Garbers, 2016).

Although research demonstrated that proactive work behaviors can affect resources at work, and that different enrichment mechanisms between work and nonwork domains exist, to the best of our knowledge, previous research has not directly addressed how work–nonwork enrichment can be facilitated by proactive behaviors at work. Additionally, previous research has not disentangled the enrichment mechanisms at the within- and between-person level. The within-person level perspective addresses how mechanisms of enrichment function within an individual employee. Conversely, the between-person level perspective evaluates how employees differ from each other in these mechanisms. Considering within- and between-person level perspectives is important because effects can differ on different levels (Bolger, Davis, & Rafaeli, 2003). It might be essential to distinguish these differences if networking behavior facilitates resources and nonwork enrichment when a change in this behavior occurs (within-person level), and/or if employees with different levels of networking behaviors also differ in their levels of resources and nonwork enrichment (between-person level). Thus, investigating both levels can lead to richer and more comprehensive insights compared to focusing on only one level of analysis. Further, theoretical assumptions and research regarding the work–nonwork interface have shifted attention to more short-term processes (e.g., Martinez-Corts, Demerouti, Bakker, & Boz, 2015; Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012) and intra-individual effects, which has reinforced the importance of investigating various levels. Even though proactive behaviors have been evaluated on the within- and between-person level (Fritz & Sonnentag, 2007), we know relatively little about

how proactive behaviors lead to instrumental and affective resource gains and their effect on the work–nonwork interface.

To adress these issues, we investigate how a specific proactive work behavior—internal networking—is related to increases in instrumental and affective resources at work, which, in turn, relate to enhanced work–nonwork enrichment. We specifically look at coworker support as an instrumental resource and positive affect at work as an affective resource that could be facilitated by networking. In line with the importance and advantages of investigating effects on different levels, we investigate these relations on a within-person level in Study 1 and on a between-person level in Study 2. In summary, the aims of our studies are (a) to examine how internal networking relates to coworker support and positive affect at work, (b) to investigate how and by which processes networking relates to work–nonwork enrichment, and (c) to examine these relations on the within- and between-person level.

With this research, we make three main contributions to the existing literature. First, we contribute to work–family enrichment research (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006) by providing a better understanding of how networking is related to the work–nonwork interface. Specifically, this contributes to a broadening of the enrichment perspective by clarifying the importance of proactive work behaviors as a way to activate different enrichment mechanisms. Second, we contribute to the literature of proactive work and career-management behaviors (e.g., Crant, 2000; King, 2004) by illustrating how proactive behaviors at work can enhance instrumental and affective resources at work. Third, by examining effects on the within and between-person level, our results further contribute to the work–nonwork enrichment and proactive behavior literature by providing insight into similarities and differences of inter- and intra-individual effects on the proposed relations.

The Work–Nonwork Interface and Networking

People occupy different life domains and different roles (e.g., employee, father/mother, friend, etc.), which are associated with various demands (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, & Snoek, 1964). These roles are not limited to the work and family domain, but also include other domains, such as community work and leisure (Fisher, Bulger, & Smith, 2009), which were herein broadly referred to as nonwork roles. To explain how different life roles can relate to each other, the work–home resource model (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012) proposes that demands and resources at work relate to personal resources in a negative or positive way, which create positive or negative outcomes in the nonwork domain. Resources are defined as everything that people see as valuable in themselves (e.g., health, self-esteem) and/or that helps people to achieve valuable ends (e.g., social support, money; Halbesleben, Neveu, Paustian-Underdahl, & Westman, 2014; Hobfoll, 2002). Importantly, resources are not static, and indiviudals can activate and develop their resources, and thereby affect the work–nonwork interface.

However, existing research and theory on the positive enrichment process from work to nonwork has generally neglected to investigate how proactive behaviors at work can affect resources at work that might, in turn, positively affect functioning in nonwork roles. Thus, building upon the work–family enrichment model (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), we propose that active behaviors at work can induce work–nonwork enrichment processes via instrumental and affective enrichment mechanisms. As a specific proactive behavior at work, we herein focus on networking. Networking is a proactive work behavior that aims to build resources in terms of building and maintaining relationships with others (Forret & Dougherty, 2004). As such, networking is different from seeking social support because seeking support is a more reactive behavior used to solve a specific problem (Barker, 2007; Rickwood & Thomas, 2012), whereas networking is a proactive behavior that does not emerge as a reaction to a problem where one needs support. Networking is thus a valuable proactive behavior that

incorporates the social context (Claes & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1998; Crant, 2000) and builds social capital (Coleman, 1988) that can act as a resource to facilitate one's achievement of work tasks and career goals. Empirical research on networking has confirmed positive relations of networking with different resources, such as knowledge creation, self-esteem, and social support (Forret & Dougherty, 2001; Kao & Wu, 2016; Wolff & Moser, 2009). According to Michael and Yukl (1993), networking can be aimed at two different environments. On the one hand, it can be directed at the organization the employee is working in (i.e., internal networking). On the other hand, it can be directed outside of the current organization (i.e., external networking). In this study, we specifically focus on internal networking because building and maintaining social relationships with colleagues at work might result in more frequent and relevant social support for mastering work-related challenges. As such, internal networking should be especially relevant for building resources at work that might positively affect the nonwork domain.

Relations Between Networking, Coworker Support, and Positive Affect at Work

In line with the work–family enrichment model (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), we focus on an instrumental (i.e., coworker support) and an affective path (i.e., positive affect at work) as work to nonwork enrichment mechanisms. We specifically presume that networking exerts its effects over both pathways. The dynamic network theory perspective of Westaby, Pfaff, and Redding (2014) has proposed that a main goal of networking is maintaining and securing supportive relationships. In our study, we apply this perspective, and based on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), we presume that internal networking can increase coworker support. According to this theory, an investment in relationships should build social resources and result in a positive return for the investing individual. For example, internal networking could foster coworker support because a coworker agrees to help with a task due to a well-maintained relationship by regular networking activities. In support of these arguments,

previous research has found a positive relation between networks and social support (Lee, Chung, & Park, 2018). Hence, we presume that networking should be positively associated with the social support of colleagues.

Hypothesis 1. Networking positively relates to coworker support.

Networking should also promote positive affect at work. Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988) have described positive affect at work as a "state of high energy, full concentration, and pleasurable engagement" (p. 1063). Based on the theory of belongingness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001) and self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), we presume that networking is related to positive affect at work. According to these theories, interactions with people should lead to positive emotions because they satisfy the needs for closeness, belonging, and relatedness. For example, an employee could feel positive because she actively maintained a relationship with a coworker and thus met her needs for closeness and belonging. In support, Macintosh and Krush (2014) found a positive relation between networking behaviors and job satisfaction. Additionally, research established positive relations between networking and various variables with positive affective elements (e.g., career satisfaction, motivation, affective organizational commitment; McCallum, Forret, & Wolff, 2014; Rory et al., 2013; Wolff & Moser, 2009). Even though previous research did not directly investigate the specific relation between networking and positive affect at work, based on theoretical arguments and related research findings, we presume:

Hypothesis 2. Networking positively relates to positive affect at work.

Enrichment Mechanisms

As stated above, the work–nonwork enrichment model of Greenhaus and Powell (2006) presumes that instrumental and affective resources acquired in the work domain can positively affect functioning in the nonwork domain. Specifically, Greenhaus and Powell (2006) have argued that social capital resources (e.g., social support) might help to achieve goals in the nonwork domain. Similarly, the work–home resource model (Ten Brummelhuis

& Bakker, 2012) proposes that contextual (e.g., social support) and personal (e.g., positive affect at work) resources facilitate outcomes in the nonwork domain because they facilitate performance in the nonwork domain. Along with COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989), these models argue that resources should stimulate an increase of further resources and valuable outcomes (Hobfoll, 2002). Therefore, in line with COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989), resources, such as coworker support and positive affect at work, should have a positive effect on the work–nonwork interface. For example, information about more efficient work strategies from coworkers might help to reduce the work load and, consequently, more time and energy can be spent in the nonwork domain to achieve nonwork goals. In line with these theoretical assumptions, previous research found a positive relation between coworker support and positive spillover to the family (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000).

In addition to such instrumental effects, positive emotions felt at work could spill over to the nonwork domain by providing more energy and motivation to meet demands in nonwork activities. In support, previous research found a positive relation between positive affect at work and work–life balance (Carlson, Kacmar, Grzywacz, Tepper, & Whitten, 2013). Additionally, Rodríguez-Muñoz et al. (2014) found a positive relation of positive feelings at work and positive feelings in the nonwork domain, which supports the notion of a positive spillover of affect from work to the nonwork domain.

Hypothesis 3: Coworker support positively relates to work–nonwork enrichment.

Hypothesis 4: Positive affect at work positively relates to work–nonwork enrichment.

By integrating the theoretical arguments provided for Hypothesis 1 and 2, we further propose that networking positively relates to the work–nonwork enrichment through coworker support (i.e., an instrumental mechanism) and positive affect at work (i.e., an affective mechanism).

Hypothesis 5: There is an indirect effect from networking on work–nonwork enrichment through increased coworker support.

Hypothesis 6: There is an indirect effect from networking on work–nonwork enrichment through increased positive affect at work.

Present Studies

We conducted two studies to examine the proposed effects on two different levels: the within- and between-person level. Study 1—a daily diary study—explores the relations of networking, coworker support, positive affect at work, and work–nonwork enrichment on the within-person level. Study 2 explores the same relations on the between-person level with three measurement points over a period of four months. Within-person approaches provide information about processes within a person, and between-person approaches show how individuals differ in these processes (Bolger et al., 2003). Further, the within-person level in the diary study (Study 1) provides information about short-term processes. By contrast, the between-person level in the longitudinal panel study (Study 2) provides information about the differences of these processes in the long term. Combining both within- and between-person level analyses has the advantage of providing insights on the similarities and differences of processes as they relate to changes within a person and the relative change between persons (Molenaar & Campbell, 2009). Thus, studying networking behavior on the within-person level provides insight into the enrichment processes induced by networking within an employee. By networking more than usual, an employee might accumulate more resources than usual, such as positive affect at work and coworker support. Unusual and novel behaviors and situations can have particularly strong effects on behaviors and experiences (Scherer, 2009). Because networking behavior is not shown all the time, this unusal behavior should thus be appraised as salient by the employee and coworkers. Thus, networking behavior might induce an individual positive reaction (positive affect at work), as well as positive reactions within the social environment (coworker support). Additionally, the between-person level provides insight into differences of the enrichment mechanisms between different employees. Because employees who tend to network more than their coworkers

might have a well-maintained and large network, they might also receive more resources, such as positive affect and coworker support, from this network compared to their coworkers. Further, these resources (coworker support and positive affect) should be related to positive outcomes in the nonwork domain on the within- and between-person level (COR; Hobfoll, 1989). While both levels of analyses thus address different questions, previous research has provided support for nonwork enrichment mechanisms linked to positive affect and support at the within- (Goh, Ilies, & Wilson, 2015; Judge & Ilies, 2004) and between-person level (Michel & Clark, 2009; Nohe, Michel, & Sonntag, 2014). In conclusion, the investigation of the within- and between-person level provides insights into the relation between networking and nonwork enrichment mechanisms in relation to behaviors of a single employee, as well as the differences in these relations between employees.

Study 1

Method

Participants and procedure. Participants were recruited by two student assistants from their personal networks in the German speaking region of Switzerland. Participants had to be employed for at least 17 hours per week (approximately 50 percent of a full-time position). After answering a general questionnaire including demographic variables, participants were asked to answer two short questionnaires (approximately five to ten minutes) per day, one after work and one before going to bed. Participants completed measures of networking, social support from coworkers, and positive affect at work after finishing work because participants were expected to be better able to judge their behavior and affect at work immediately after work compared to later on. The measure of work–nonwork enrichment was assessed before going to bed because non-work enrichment occurs after work and should thus be assessed at the end of the day. All daily questionnaires were distributed via email over five consecutive work days. The consecutive order was checked by time and date stamps.

Overall, 122 employees completed the general questionnaire, and 100 (82%) with a total of 340 observations (out of 500 maximum possible)—answered at least two of the daily questionnaires and were retained for subsequent analyses. Participants who did not complete at least two daily measures were slightly younger (t = -2.16, p < .05) and indicated less positive affect at work at the baseline (t = -2.08, p < .05), but did not differ on the other study variables from the final sample. The final sample of 100 employees consisted of 56% female, and the participants worked in their organization for an average of 3.2 years (SD = 2.71). On average, the participants were 27.09 years old (SD = 3.67). About 40.5% had a vocational qualification, and 59.4% had completed a Bachelor- or Master-level education. Furthermore, about 92% of the participants did not have children. The participants worked on average 7.88 to 8.42 (SD = 1.40 and SD = 1.62, respectively) hours per day in this observed week in various fields: manufacturing (26%), retail services (26%), social services (20%), commerce (20%), financial services (7%), and other fields (1%).

Measures. The used scales were independently translated from their original English version into German by one of the authors and a doctoral student, and differences in translations were resolved in a consolidatory meeting to arrive at the final translation. This procedure ensures the connotation, naturalness, and comprehensibility of the items, and thus is often preferable to a strict translation-back-translation procedure (Van de Vijver, Leung, & Leung, 1997). Further, some scales needed to be adapted for use on a daily level. As is done in other diary studies, we prompted participants to think of daily actions or events by including, for example, the term *today* in instructions or item prompts (Ohly, Sonnentag, Niessen, & Zapf, 2010).

Networking. Internal networking was measured with the scale by Ng and Feldman (2013) based on the Political Skill Inventory (Ferris et al., 2005). The three items measuring an active networking behavior and representing the developing/maintaining and using aspect of networking were chosen from this scale (“I spend a lot of time and effort networking with

others within my organization"; "I spend a lot of time developing connections with others within my organization"; "I am good at using my connections and network within my organization to make things happen at work"), and adapted to assess a daily behavior ("Today, I spent a lot of time and effort at work networking with others in my organization"). Items were answered on a five-point response scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Cronbach's alphas ranged from α = .70 to α = .85 over the five measurement times.

Coworker support. Coworker support was measured with the four-item scale by Schwarzer, Dunkelschetter, and Kemeny (1994), including emotional (e.g., "Today, my colleagues at work showed me that they like me") and instrumental support (e.g., "Today, my colleagues at work helped me to complete a task"), adapted to a daily level. The items were answered on a six-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not true at all*) to 6 (*totally true*). Cronbach's alphas ranged from α = .77 to α = .90 over the five measurement times.

Positive affect at work. Positive affect at work was measured with the activated pleasant affect dimension of the Multi-Affect Indicator by Warr, Bindl, Parker, and Inceoglu (2014). Participants were asked to indicate how often they felt a particular feeling on this specific work day with four items (e.g., *joyful*) on a seven-point response scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*always*). Cronbach's alphas ranged from α = .80 to α = .88 over the five measurement times.

Work–nonwork enrichment. We used the work enhancement of personal life scale from Fisher et al. (2009), adapted to the daily level. This scale included three items (e.g., "Because of my job, I was in a better mood at home today") with a five-point Likert-type response scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*almost always*). Cronbach's alphas ranged from α = .71 to α = .83 over the five measurement times.

Control variables. Gender and having children were considered as control variables (1 = *no children*, 2 = *having children*, 1 = *female*, 2 = *male*) in the general questionnaire. The

work–life interface has been associated with having children in previous studies (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005). Gender has also been associated with the work–life interface (Martinengo, Jacob, & Hill, 2010) and building social capital behavior (Claes & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1998) in previous research. Gender and having children as Level 2 control variables were included on the between-person level and accounted for variance in the means. However, including these control variables did not change the model results significantly. Gender and having children were hence not integrated in the final model to improve power and interpretability of the results.

Results

The analysis was conducted in MPlus7 (L. K. Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2012). In a first step, the daily inter-individual variations of the variables were evaluated by calculating the ICC (intra class correlations) values (Hox, 2010). In accordance with Hox (2010), we evaluated the amount of variance that might be due to within-person level differences in terms of intra-class correlations at $\rho = .05$ as *small*, $\rho = .10$ as *medium*, and $\rho = .15$ as *large*. The explained variance by intra-individual variations ranged from 18% to 48% (ICC's ranged from $\rho = .52$ to $\rho = .82$; see Table 1 for details), which suggests that meaningful within-person change from day to day occurred in all examined variables (Hox, 2010). Additionally, two-level confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were calculated to check the suitability of two-level analysis. According to Hu and Bentler (1998), all CFAs achieved good model fit indices with standardized root mean square residual $(SRMR)_{within} = 0$ to .007 and $SRMR_{between} = 0$ to .022. Full results of these analyses are available from the authors upon request.

Descriptive statistics. Correlations between manifest variables on the within-person level (Table 1) suggested that networking was positively associated with positive affect at work and coworker support. Furthermore, coworker support, but not positive affect, was positively associated with work–nonwork enrichment.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Manifest Study 1 Variables on the Within- and Between-Person Level

	M	*SD*	ICC	1	2	3	4
1 Networking	1.81	.80	.54		.13*	.16**	.02
2 Coworker support	3.91	1.13	.52	.32**		.12	.14*
3 Positive affect at work	3.67	1.19	.68	.29*	.42***		-.01
4 Work–nonwork enrichment	2.03	.85	.79	.64***	.59***	.29**	

Notes. *N*(within) = 340, *n*(between) = 100, correlations of the within-level are above, on the between-person level underneath the diagonal, ICC = intra-class correlations.
*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Testing of hypotheses and discussion. Structural equation modeling (SEM) with manifest variables was used to examine the proposed indirect effects model with social support and positive affect at work, mediating the effect of networking on work–nonwork enrichment (Figure 1). All relations were modeled on both levels simultaneously to account for inter-individual effects (L. K. Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2012; Preacher, Zhang, & Zyphur, 2011). Coworker support and positive affect at work were allowed to freely correlate because support and affect could be related (e.g., Lawler, 2001; Wolff, Schmiedek, Brose, & Lindenberger, 2013). The indirect effects were evaluated with the multiplication of the different path weights in line with standard practice (Bauer, Preacher, & Gil, 2006). Missing data was accounted for by the use of the full information maximum likelihood method (FIML). FIML avoids bias and has higher statistical power than pair- or list-wise deletion (Little & Rubin, 2014). Fit indices were interpreted along the recommendations of Hu and Bentler (1998), with root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) < .06, standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) < .08, comparative fit index (CFI) > .95, and the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) > .95.

The tested model achieved good fit (χ^2 =.003, *df* = 1, p > .05, RMSEA = .000, CFI = 1.000, TLI =1.120, $SRMR_{within}$ = .001, $SRMR_{between}$ = .000). The results showed that on days where participants reported more networking behavior, they also experienced more coworker support (β = .16, *p* < .01; supporting Hypothesis 1), and more positive affect at work (β = .13, *p* < .01; supporting Hypothesis 2). The positive association of networking and coworker support is in line with social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which proposed that an investment in relationships should result in a gain of social resources for the investing individual. Furthermore, the positive relation between networking and positive affect underlines the argument of the theory of belongingness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Seibert, et al., 2001), such that individuals should experience positive feelings when they build and maintain relationships with other people.

Additionally, coworker support on a given day was associated with more nonwork enrichment on that day (β = .15, *p* < .05), supporting Hypothesis 3. This relation underlines the argument of the work–home resource model (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012) and the work–family enrichment model (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), in that the availability of instrumental resources should positively affect functioning in a nonwork domain. However, positive affect at work was not related to work–nonwork enrichment (β = -.02, *p* > .05), not supporting Hypothesis 4. Testing indirect effects, the total indirect effect of networking on work–nonwork enrichment through social support was significant (*b* = .02, 95% CI = [.001, .033]), supporting Hypothesis 5. However, the indirect effect from networking to work–nonwork enrichment through positive affect at work was nonsignificant (*b* = -.00, 95% CI = [-.014, .010]), not supporting Hypothesis 6.

In sum, even though the results are in line with the enrichment model of Greenhaus and Powell (2006) concerning the instrumental enrichment mechanism, they do not support the affective enrichment mechanism of positive affect at work on the within-person level. This implies that coworker support enriches the nonwork domain on the within-person level,

but positive affect at work does not. The results also mean that internal networking enriches the nonwork domain in an instrumental, but not affective, manner on a within-person level.

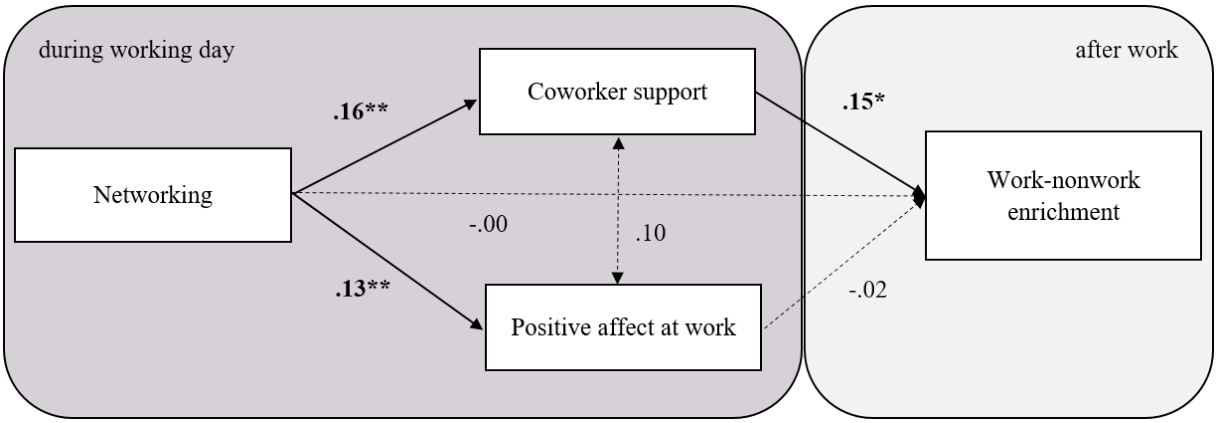

Figure 1. Mediation model of Study 1 with coworker support and positive affect at work mediating the relationship between networking and work–nonwork enrichment on the within-person level on a day.
Observations = 340. Dashed lines represent nonsignificant paths. Standardized effects are reported.
** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Study 2

Method

Participants and procedure. The same procedure as in Study 1 with a student assistant recruitment approach resulted in 210 participants who were employed for at least 17 hours per week (approximately 50 percent of a full-time position). The questionnaire at T1 included all study measures: networking, coworker support, positive affect at work, and work–nonwork enrichment. Participants were invited again for two follow-up assessments, separated by two months each. A two-month time lag seems to be long enough to expect meaningful change in the assessed constructs, whereas it is not so long that the enrichment mechanisms would not be observed anymore. At T2, the resources (coworker support and positive affect at work), and at T3, work-nonwork enrichment, were measured. Participants who completed at least one of the follow-up questionnaires at T2 or T3 were retained for the final sample (N = 162; 76%). The final participants did not significantly differ from those

who were excluded in any assessed measure at T1. The final sample of 162 participants was composed of 55.3% female participants. The participants worked in their organizations for an average of 3.21 years (*SD* = 2.24) and were, on average, 28.1 (*SD* = 6.05) years old. About 53.4% had completed a Bachelor- or Master-level education, 36.3% had a vocational qualification, and 10.3% had a secondary or high school degree as their highest education level. Furthermore, 90.7% of the participants did not have any children. The participants worked, on average, 35.95 (*SD* = 8.49) hours per week in various fields: social services (25%), commerce (23%), manufacturing (12%), retail services (16%), financial services (13%), and other fields (11%).

Measures. We used the same networking, coworker support, positive affect at work, and work–nonwork enrichment measures as in Study 1. However, we used the original item format and referred to the last two months (e.g., coworker support: "My colleagues at work helped me to complete a task"; work-nonwork enrichment: "Because of my job, I was in a better mood at home"). The same control variables (i.e., gender and having children) as in Study 1 were evaluated. Because including gender and having children as control variables did not change the model results significantly, they were not integrated in the final model. Means, standard deviations, correlations between the assessed constructs, and Cronbach's alphas are shown in Table 2.

Results

To check measurement quality, we tested temporal measurement invariance for the repeated measures. Coworker support achieved configural invariance across T1 and T2. Positive affect at work (across T1 and T2), and work–nonwork enrichment (across T1 and T3) achieved metric invariance (Horn & McArdle, 1992), which supports their use of the following longitudinal analyses. Full results of these tests are available from the authors.

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Study 2 Variables

	M	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 T1 Networking	3.05	.85	**.82**						
2 T1 Coworker support	3.43	.90	.30**	**.88**					
3 T1 Positive affect at work	4.25	1.78	.40***	.22*	**.82**				
4 T1 Work–nonwork enrichment	2.66	.92	.36***	.23*	.67***	**.75**			
5 T2 Coworker support	3.26	1.16	.58***	.68***	.49***	.13	**.87**		
6 T2 Positive affect at work	4.30	1.90	.48***	.35***	81***	.72***	.43***	**.89**	
7 T3 Work–nonwork enrichment	2.69	.78	.36***	.39***	.71***	.75***	.17	.58***	**.74**

Notes. $N = 161$, Cronbach's alphas are in bold on the diagonal.
*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Descriptive statistics. The correlations in Table 2 showed that networking at T1 was positively associated with positive affect at work at T2 and coworker support at T2, and these two resources were positively associated with work–nonwork enrichment at T3.

Testing hypotheses and discussion. A structural equation model (SEM) in MPlus7 (L. K. Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2012), with latent variables, was estimated to examine the proposed model of support from coworkers and positive affect at work, mediating the effect of networking on work–nonwork enrichment (Figure 2). Autoregressive effects from T1 to coworker support at T2, positive affect at T2, and work–nonwork enrichment at T3 were modeled. The total indirect effects were evaluated with a multiplication of the different path weights based on a bias-corrected bootstrap analysis (MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004). As in Study 1, coworker support and positive affect at work were allowed to freely correlate. Missing data was accounted for by the use of the FIML method. Fit indices were interpreted in the same manner as in Study 1.

The measurement model (χ^2 = 324.899, df = 256, p < .01, RMSEA = .041 [.025, .054], CFI = .964, TLI =.958, SRMR = .064), and the proposed mediation model showed good model fit indices: χ^2 = 324.899, *df* = 256, p < .01, RMSEA = .041 [.025, .054], CFI = .964, TLI =.958, SRMR = .064. Hypothesis 1 and 2 were supported because networking at T1 predicted an inter-individual increase in coworker support (β = .45, p < .001), and positive affect at work (β = .20, p < .05) from T1 to T2. These relations are in line with our assumptions that employees who enact more networking behavior, compared to their colleagues, will also accumulate more instrumental (coworker support) and affective resources (positive affect) than their colleagues over a period of two months.

In contrast to Hypothesis 3, coworker support at T2 did not predict change in work–nonwork enrichment from T1 to T3 (β = .06, p > .05). Thus, the indirect effect of networking at T1 on work–nonwork enrichment at T3 (controlling for T1) through coworker support at T2 (controlling for T1) was also nonsignificant (b = .03, 95% bias-corrected CI [-.100, .182]),

not supporting Hypothesis 5. Conversely, positive affect at work at T2 predicted an increase in work–nonwork enrichment over the same period (β = .36, $p < .05$), supporting Hypothesis 4. Moreover, the indirect effect of networking at T1 on work–nonwork enrichment at T3 (controlling for T1) through positive affect at work at T2 (controlling for T1) was significant (b = .07, 95% bias-corrected CI [.005, .241]), supporting Hypothesis 6 regarding the affective enrichment path. Even though the results are in line with the enrichment model of Greenhaus and Powell (2006) concerning the affective enrichment mechanism, they do not show the instrumental enrichment mechanism of coworker support on the between-person level. This implies that internal networking enriches the nonwork domain affectively on the between-person level over a time of four months, but not instrumentally.

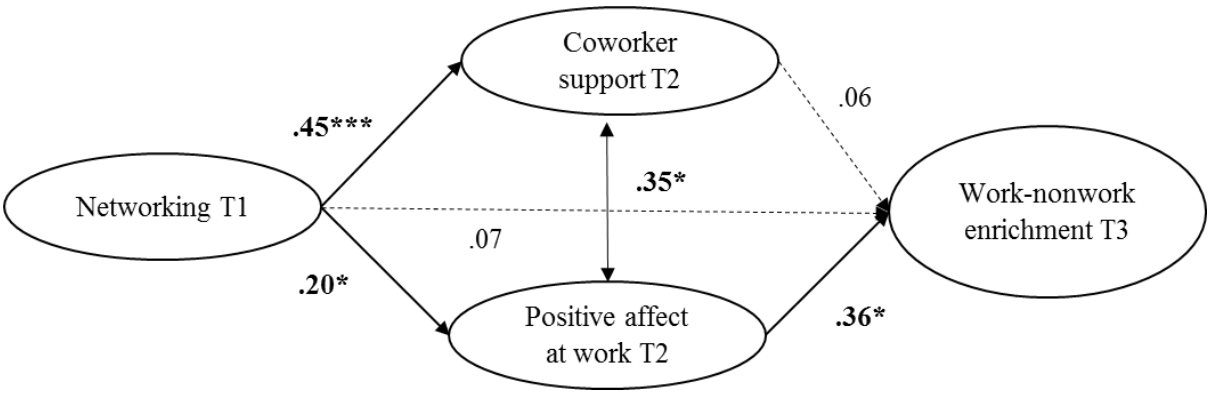

Figure 2. Mediation model of Study 2 with coworker support and positive affect at work mediating the relationship between networking and work–nonwork enrichment on a between-person level over four months.
N = 161, dashed lines represent nonsignificant paths. Standardized effects are reported. T2 and T3 variables were controlled for T1 level (not shown in figure). Time lag between T1, T2, and T3 was two months each.
*** $p < .001$, * $p < .05$.

Overall Discussion

The aims of our studies were (a) to examine how internal networking relates to coworker support and positive affect at work, (b) to investigate how and by which processes networking relates to work–nonwork enrichment, and (c) to examine these relations on the within- and between-person level. The results support the positive relations between internal

networking and coworker support and positive affect at work on the within- (Study 1) and between-person level (Study 2). These results imply that engaging in networking is not only associated with an increase in instrumental, contextual resources in the form of more social capital (social support), but also with increased affective, personal resources (positive affect at work) on the within- and between-person level. Thus, if an employee engages in networking more than usual, this can trigger increased resources accumulation in terms of social support and positive affect (within-person level). In addition, employees who engage in more networking compared to their colleagues also seem to benefit from higher levels of coworker support and positive affect at work compared to others (between-person level). This knowledge expands existing networking theory, which proposed an association of networking with social capital (Coleman, 1988), but did not consider how networking might also foster other—specifically, affective—resources. Furthermore, these findings are in line with COR theory (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll, 1989), which proposed that resources can be accumulated through an investment of resources. Networking does imply an investment of resources, such as energy and time, which consequently promotes the acquisition of further resources (i.e., coworker support and positive affect at work). These effects are supported by the observed within-person effects in the way that more networking behavior than usual on a given day is associated with more positive affect and coworker support that usual on that day. COR theory also proposes that individuals with more resources are able to invest more resources, and therefore have a greater probability of further resource gain. The results at the between-person level provide support for this assumption because those employees who engage more in networking behaviors than others (i.e., invest more resources) also perceived a stronger increase in resources (i.e., coworker support and positive affect) compared to others. These results on the within- and between-person levels thus make a contribution to COR theory by adding specific insight regarding resource accumulation.

Our study also found an instrumental nonwork enrichment mechanism on the within-person level and an affective nonwork enrichment mechanism on the between-person level. Generally speaking, the results concerning the positive spillover of social support and positive affect at work to the nonwork domain are in line with the work–family enrichment model of Greenhaus and Powell (2006), and with previous studies (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Rodríguez-Muñoz et al., 2014). Thus, the results imply that internal networking can promote work to nonwork enrichment via both instrumental and affective mechanisms. This finding expands work–nonwork enrichment theory (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012) by showing how an active behavior at work (i.e., networking) can be a facilitator of such enrichment mechanisms.

However, although we could support both enrichment mechanisms, we also found different effects on the within- and between-person level of analysis. On the within-person level, the results show that if an employee is engaging in more networking behavior compared to his/her usual networking behavior, this employee might also perceive more instrumental enrichment than usual. Conversely, on the between-person level, employees enacting more networking behaviors, compared to others, perceive more affective enrichment than others. Thus, a change in networking behavior on a specific day seems to facilitate coworker support and nonwork enrichment, whereas general networking, more than others, facilitates positive affect and nonwork enrichment. A possible explanation for these findings might be that instrumental help is more likely triggered by networking on the within-person level. For example, an employee who engages in more internal networking than usual (within-person level) has more opportunities to receive additional instrumental support on that day when desired. Because such additional instrumental support meets a specific desire, receiving this support might be more important than the additional positive affect at work for facilitating functioning in nonwork on a daily level. Therefore, employees might experience a stronger relation between support and work–nonwork enrichment than between positive affect at work

and work–nonwork enrichment on the within-person level. In support of this reasoning, Wolff et al. (2013) reported on a within-person level that the match of received and needed support was associated with greater well-being, whereas a mismatch was associated with more health complaints.

Conversely, employees who exhibit more networking behavior than others on the between-person level might not desire support for specific tasks. For example, Wolff and Kim (2012) found a relation between personality traits, such as extraversion, and networking behaviors, which has suggested that individual differences in networking partially depend on basic traits. Further, conscientiousness and self-monitoring are also related to networking (Ferris et al., 2005). Therefore, employees who generally enact more networking behaviors than others might do so primarily out of a motive of relatedness and a sense of duty rather than a desire to benefit from instrumental help. Thus, the fulfillment of these motives and the associated positive affect might be more influential for individual differences in experienced nonwork enrichment than would be the gain of social support.

Study Limitations

The self-reported data is one limitation of our studies, which might induce common method bias (e.g., P. M. Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). However, self-reported measures are an appropriate way of capturing subjective feelings, which were also investigated in our studies. Further, the student assistant sampling recruitment method does not result in a representative sample of the population, thus the generalizability of our findings might be limited to young, highly educated, and mostly childless employees. Moreover, even though data was gathered in a longitudinal manner, no strict causal implications can be drawn. Our results showed that both resources are activated at the same time, but we were not able to disentangle the exact mechanisms of the affective and instrumental enrichment process proposed by Greenhaus and Powell (2006) because of our study design. Future studies could provide more insight into the functioning of affective and instrumental enrichment

mechanisms by including more measurement points and assessing whether instrumental resources also promote affective resources, as suggested by Greenhaus and Powell (2006).

Another limitation is that although we examined whether networking is associated with a work–nonwork enhancement, we did not investigate whether networking could also have negative effects on the work–nonwork interface. This might occur because the investment of time and energy into building relationships at work could result in work–nonwork conflict due to resource drain (Byron, 2005). Future research could thus include both positive and negative effects of networking on the work–nonwork interface, to investigate the potential polarity of this relation.

Additionally, our study did not provide an explicit definition of networking to the participants, which could be done in future studies to differentiate between other types of interaction among employees. Moreover, other constructs besides internal networking might be applied to investigate the building of coworker support and positive affect at work. For example, measures of collaboration or interpersonal context, such as relationship quality, might be useful for investigating resource gain. Finally, our study confounds the level effects with different time lags. The within-person level is associated with a daily measurement, whereas the between-person level is associated with a total time lag of four months. Thus, it is unclear to what extent differences in results between the two studies are due to different time lags or different levels of analysis. For example, more positive affect at work could be gained in the long run, according to COR theory (Halbesleben, et al., 2014; Hobfoll, 1989), because more resources can be accumulated through a positive gain spiral and therefore have stronger relation with nonwork enrichment in the long-term rather than the short-term. Additionally, networking could be related to positive affect at work because employees who network more often than others gain more positive affect at work (between-person level), due to a well-maintained network. Thus, future studies could evaluate the two levels for the same time lags, to separate time and level effects.

Future Research

Our results have a number of implications for future research. As our results suggest, resources affected by networking are not only external (e.g., social capital; Mohd Rasdi, Ismail, & Garavan, 2011), but also encompass personal resources. Future research could expand upon these findings and examine how other personal resources are affected by networking. For example, networking might promote intrinsic motivation at work because it might help employees successfully handle challenges at work with the help of others, and therefore activate a feeling of relatedness, competence, and autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Our results also suggest that work–nonwork enrichment theories could benefit from integrating the role of active behaviors at work as facilitators of work–nonwork spillover processes. Future research could investigate the relations between different proactive behaviors at work and nonwork enrichment and conflict. For example, personal initiative as an investment of resources into work (Frese, Kring, Soose, & Zempel, 1996) might activate or deplete resources (cf., COR; Hobfoll, 1989) that could affect the nonwork domain. Additionally, future research could investigate if and how resources in nonwork domains facilitate proactive behaviors at work, such as networking. For example, Timms et al. (2015) found a positive relation between work-nonwork enrichment and work engagement. Thus, proactive behaviors, such as networking, could be facilitated by work and nonwork interactions.

Finally, the results reaffirm the importance of investigating multiple levels in future research and theory because the same model resulted in different results on the within- and between-person level. Therefore, future research could investigate nonwork enrichment (and also conflict) mechanisms on within- and between-person levels in more detail. For example, various resources and demands at work can affect the nonwork domain (e.g., Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012), but we do not know if these resources and demands spill over to the nonwork domain on the within- and between-person level similarly, or if differences

between levels occur. Future studies could also investigate reasons for differing effects on within- and between-person levels. For example, it could be investigated whether engaging in networking is facilitated by different motives on different levels. For example, networking behavior might be induced by a desire to receive support for a career move on the within-person level, but by the need for relatedness on the between-person level (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Besides looking at work–nonwork interaction, future research could also evaluate within- and between-person differences in the spillover of resources and demands from nonwork to work.

Implications for Practice and Conclusions

Our studies suggest that networking is a behavior at work which can increase different resources and thereby enrich functioning in the nonwork domain. Therefore, employees could be trained in how to use and maintain relationships within an organization efficiently (cf., Spurk, Kauffeld, Barthauer, & Heinemann, 2015). Additionally, organizations should be aware of the positive effect of networking on resources and provide opportunities for internal networking. For example, organizations could provide shared spaces for breaks, low hierarchical structure, project teams, and events with the whole organization to facilitate the communication and interaction of employees. Additionally, career counseling could motivate and assist clients to engage in more networking because networking is an effective career management behavior that is not only related to positive career outcomes (e.g., King, 2004, Wolff & Moser, 2009), but also to a positive work–nonwork interface, as our studies suggest.

In conclusion, the results of our studies extend previous research that focused mainly on the relation between networking and building external (social) resources by suggesting that networking could also be a suitable means to gain affective resources at work. We also contribute to theory and research on work–nonwork enrichment mechanisms that generally did not consider the role that active work behaviors might play in facilitating the work–nonwork interface. Finally, we showed that affective and instrumental enrichment

mechanisms might differ on the within- and between-person level, which might be important for more closely investigating the functioning of different work–nonwork linking mechanisms in future research.

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